

# 28 killed in Benue communities over alleged desecration of shrine in Ebonyi

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ABOUT 28 people have been killed in some communities in Ado Local Government Area of Benue State.

The crisis, which is a clan crisis, was said to have started from Ebonyi State but extended to Benue communities.

Chairman of the council area, James Oche, who disclosed this to the *Nigerian Tribune* on Wednesday, said the crisis started when a group of people who were angered by the desecration of their shrine in Ebonyi community decided to unleash terror on Benue communities.

Oche said the crisis started from Ebonyi State and spread to Ezza community in Benue.

There has been age-long clan war between communities in Ebonyi and Benue states.

The council boss added that one of the largest markets in Ezza community was completely destroyed.

He said: "The crisis is be-

tween Effunn and Ezza people. The crisis started from Ebonyi State and spread to communities in Benue.

"What I heard was that someone from one of the communities desecrated one of their shrines and instead of settling their crisis in Ebonyi, they moved the crisis to Benue, where over 28 people have been killed as of the last count today [Wednesday].

Oche said security operatives had been deployed in the affected areas.

He said: "Women and children were killed and property worth several millions of naira destroyed. For instance, at Ulayi ward, they sacked five of the 10 council wards and the second largest market in the council was destroyed."

The chairman called for more deployment of security operatives in the area.

Efforts to get the reaction of the state Police Public Relations Officer in Benue, Catherine Anene, failed as she didn't answer calls made to her mobile phone.